

#39 *LadyLike*

Exploring & Expressing Femininity



Hot! Hot! Hot! Profile
Amanda Richards

Flash Back
Grey Ryder
Part 2

Photo Feature
Only in New York
WIGSTOCK!

TVideo Review
The
Woman
Inside

Letters, Letters,
& Lots of Photos!

A How To for you-
Photo Secrets
from a Pro!

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Editorial

Admirers. T-Hawks. Trannie-chasers. Who are these men? What do they want? And most importantly, will they buy a girl dinner? With the increase in Internet use (for gosh sake, companies are giving away free computers if you sign up) many more people are quickly finding information about areas that old fashioned resources wouldn't have provided. Areas like, "How can I meet a hot TG babe?" (To be fair, the Internet *has* helped TG girls and boys alike to develop community and feel better about themselves.)

When TGs first started cruising the Information Superhighway (there's a term you don't hear that often anymore) it was as an adjunct to their magazine and TV paperback lives. Now, instead of living in a post office box the TV in the middle of nowhere can live in her PC. Chat rooms and IRC have given everyone the opportunity to "meet" both transgendered and regular folks in any guise they care to assume. Debbie from Michigan might really be Frank from Fargo. Men who have admired transgender pulchritude from afar are now able to log on and get the finest TG porno downloaded to their laptop. (If you get my drift...)

Who are these guys? I have a theory. I bet you knew I would. I think they fall into two general categories. A Category 1 trannie chaser is a gay man who can't admit he is gay. His own ingrained homophobia won't allow him to go to a gay bar and meet a nice guy. He needs a love object to make him feel like he is just another straight guy, and the TG girl gives him the best of both worlds with feminine looks and masculine "equipment." These are the guys who date transsexuals until she has her GRS. Then they break up with her when she needs them most. Okay, that's a little bitter, but I've seen it all too often.

A Category 2 T-hawk is himself a crossdresser. He has such a strong masculine image of himself that he feels silly dressing up like a woman, particularly in a public place. If he attends a support group he will never dress for the meetings. Unlike a lot of TVs, he can't ignore his masculine traits (like a beard or being 6'4") if he slips into a dress. So, he projects his crossdressing desires onto TGs who do dress. He will usually disappoint his TG girlfriend at some point by asking her to dress him up in the bedroom.

The TG community has always had male admirers. I got hit on at the first event I ever attended, lo those many years ago. Just before the Legs Contest I was approached by an admirer (who is still a regular at CD events, I believe) and asked if I'd like some of his attentions. He quickly moved on to the next girl after I (in panic) told him, "No thanks."

Now, a new phase in the development of admirers is

starting. From my work with Renaissance, I've noted more phone calls and letters from guys looking for TG girls. From my social life, I have seen more men out in TG friendly clubs looking for Miss Right. Unfortunately, for the gal who wants a steady date to take her out and show her off, most of the guys in the clubs are looking for Miss-Right-For-The-Night. They've managed to figure out what they want but they're too embarrassed to be seen with Miss Right in public in case she gets read. The older admirer had decided what he wanted and then figured out that he could find it at crossdressing conventions, or in the few special TG clubs that you can find in places like L.A. and New York City.

These new guys are just like crossdressers nervously attending their first support group meeting. They're all worked up about finally going out to find a TG girl at a local club and in their excitement they forget they'll have a better chance if they treat TG girls like human beings. Try talking to her for awhile, fellas. Most of the admirers I've run into have lived up to the Lounge Lizard stereotype. Their smoothest line is, "Wanna go out to my car?" There *are* TG girls out there interested in dating men, and some that *might be* interested if the men were more gentlemanly.

The Internet has spoiled many girls and admirers by getting them to buy into the "hot trannie tramp" image. When you first learn about transgender stuff on the Net the majority of what you find is "TV Sluts in Bondage" and "Hot Horny TS Action." Like most porn, this stuff bears little resemblance to real life. If you want to find a TG girl who might be interested in dating, treat her like a person, not an image on your monitor.

If you do engage in *any* sexual activity please remember to practice safer sex. One guy I met told me he was on a quest to find a TG girl for some intimate activity. Questing is fine, just remember it's not worth contracting a fatal disease, or any of the other sexually transmitted diseases. Help boost the sale of condoms before you get intimate.

How about you? Are you an admirer? Have you dated an admirer? Send me your thoughts on the issue of men who like TG girls. Maybe we'll get around to an article on it sometime soon. Have fun, and like we always say at LadyLike, don't dream it, be it.



#39 LadyLike

Exploring & Expressing Femininity

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Publisher

JoAnn Roberts

Editor

Angela Gardner

Sales & Advertising

CDS, PO Box 61263

King of Prussia, PA 19406-1263

Phone: 610.640.9449

email – LLmag@cdspub.com

Web Page – <http://www.cdspub.com/LL.html>

Amanda Richards



Age: 43
Profession: IT
Residence: Eastern Penna.
Height: 5' 8"
Weight: 155 lbs. (Liar!)
Measurements: 38D, 29, 39
Shoe Size: 8 1/2
Favorite Things: My family, my friends, a great new pair of shoes, shopping for those shoes, music.
Turn-ons: My wife.
Wearing those new shoes out for the first time.
Turnoffs: Smoking, dishonesty, having a heel break on one of those new shoes while wearing them out for the first time.

Hot Hot Hot! Amanda Richards



LL: Like every Profile, start at the beginning.

AR: I started dressing at about 12 or 13 years old. I came home early from school one day and had the curious urge to try on my sister's clothes. This was the late 60's and she had all these cute little mini-skirts. I was ner-

vous of course, but oh what a fabulous feeling. From that day on I used every opportunity to be alone in the house. I would hurriedly try on my mother's

or sister's clothes and then scramble to get them off when I heard someone com-

ing home. I used to spend an extremely long time locked in the bathroom trying on makeup. My family must have thought I had awful stomach problems!

LL: Yes, it's amazing how we would do such bizarre things and our families ignored it, for the most part. Let's put aside the terrible years of adolescence and move on. What about the college years?

AR: I pledged a fraternity as a freshman and during the second year things took a curious turn. As part of the "hell-week" initiation rites, the active chapter of the fraternity held a nice sit-down steak dinner for the new pledges as a reward for all the hard work and embarrassment they had endured. It was called the "redhead" dinner. The pledges were told that some of the best looking girls on campus had been invited over to be their dates for dinner. They were sequestered upstairs while the girls arrived. After a long period of anticipation each young man was brought down and introduced to his date for the evening. It was true, some of the most enticing ladies on campus waited there in the living room of the fraternity house. As each new initiate was introduced the crowd of lovelies seated in the living room was dwindling. Among those last few beauties was one very interesting surprise. Seated with her back to the new initiates was one vision of loveliness with auburn locks. Me!

LL: How did you get transformed? Did you get dressed yourself?

AR: The active brothers arranged for several of the sorority girls to come over early and do a complete make-over on me. They brought clothes, makeup, undergarments, hair curlers, for my shoulder length red hair, the

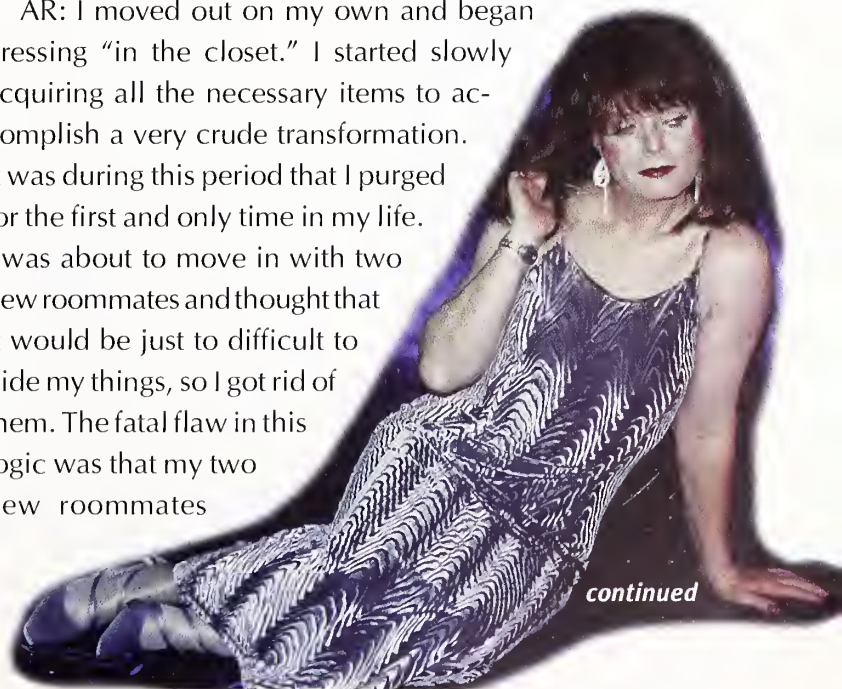
works! I got to spend two fabulous hours having these gorgeous sorority girls apply makeup for me, and help me get dressed. It was the first time I had ever been completely made up and dressed. Also very definitely the first time that I had ever been out in public.

LL: What about your "date?"

AR: My lucky escort for the evening was the ladies man of the pledge class. This guy was used to dating the very best looking girls on campus. When I turned to meet him, he was the perfect gentleman. It took him a minute, but he did eventually recognize me. The embarrassment on his face was evident, but even at that stage he took it very well. He extended his arm, which I accepted, and he walked me into the dining room. We had a lovely dinner, and he was the perfect gentleman throughout. After dinner there was music for dancing and he took me out on the floor for our special spotlight dance. Everyone applauded and congratulated him on his great fortune at having such a lovely escort. The other guys were really very kind and supportive toward him. All of the girls and even some of the guys remarked on what a lovely young lady I made. Our housemother was particularly taken with my looks and suggested that I should try it more often. If she only knew. I had the pleasure of reprising my role during my junior year as well. Believe me, I know this sounds like something stolen from one of those TV novels, but I swear it's the truth.

LL: Well that was quite an initiation for you, as well. I know some our readers are turning green with envy right about now. After having such great chances to crossdress in college, what did you do about dressing after you graduated?

AR: I moved out on my own and began dressing "in the closet." I started slowly acquiring all the necessary items to accomplish a very crude transformation. It was during this period that I purged for the first and only time in my life. I was about to move in with two new roommates and thought that it would be just too difficult to hide my things, so I got rid of them. The fatal flaw in this logic was that my two new roommates



continued



were women. Neither of them knew of my little hobby. Then I came to realize that we were all about the same size. It doesn't take a genius to figure out where this went.

LL: Female roommates your size can be such a blessing.

AR: I would wait until they were both out, or gone for the weekend and have myself a party. It was during this

period that I managed the courage to go out for the first time. Those first excursions amounted to a walk around the block at 3 in the morning, but it was a start.

LL: Those late night walks are so safe, too. I think we all did that, not realizing that we could have really gotten into trouble as women alone at 3 in the morning. Did your roommates ever catch you in their clothes?

AR: I finally told one of them about my little adventures. She was very understanding, but asked that I stop using her clothes. That's when I started rebuilding my wardrobe.

LL: What about a social life?

AR: I was dating pretty regularly. I just never could seem to find the right woman. I had nearly given up when a mutual friend introduced me to her roommate. I was immediately attracted to her and we went on our first date a short time later.

LL: When did you tell her about Amanda?

AR: We had been going out for a month or two, and I realized that marriage was definitely on my mind. I had kept my secret from all but two people in my life and I felt the need to be honest with her if marriage really was a possibility. On the way home from a movie I decided the secret needed to be revealed. I started out by telling her that this was probably the last time we'd ever go out together, I wasn't anticipating a positive result. I told her that there was something about me that she needed to know. Then, I just couldn't get the words out of my mouth.

LL: You left her hanging like that? What did she say?

AR: Later in the evening it was decided that she should try and guess what the secret was. After we got through axe murderer, prison record, and all that, she hit the nail on the head. She guessed the truth! She handled it so well. She asked for a couple of weeks to get used to the idea so I let it be. Eventually, I showed her some pictures and then we moved on to having me dress for her.

LL: So you're glad you came out to her?

AR: She has been my confidant, photographer and number one fan. It was my wife who encouraged me to get out to a support group meeting for the first time. She accompanied me to the first and several subsequent meetings. I'm a very lucky man. My wife has taught Amanda to love herself, and to be courageous. She has given me the strength to be where I am today.

LL: That's all positive, but there must be a downside, at least now and then.

AR: It's not all roses for us. There are definitely times when my wife resents my feminine side. This little hobby of mine takes a lot of time, money and mental energy. We have a young son and for now we've decided he is not to know about Amanda. He's a very bright little guy and keeping such a secret from him is not going to be easy. We also have my wife's mother living with us.

LL: How has the Internet benefited or impacted your cross-dressing?

AR: In 1997 we connected our household to the net. The vast amount of resources I discovered there simply astounded me. For nearly a year I spent every spare moment surfing the Net. By this time I was certainly aware that there were others out there like myself, but to be able to reach out to girls all around the globe in an instant was absolutely incredible!





LL: So your wife stopped being a crossdressing widow and became an Internet widow.

AR: I have to admit, surfing became a bit of an addiction for me. As with all such things, this addiction was not without it's costs. It has caused some friction in my marriage and I have embarked on a self-imposed twelve-step program to cut back. My advice to girls out there is everything in moderation. It is very easy to be pulled deep into cyberspace.

Be sure to give proper attention to your real world responsibilities. They are what your life is truly all about.

LL: What was the most important find you made in cyberspace?

AR: The Paradise in the Poconos web site. This weekend event became the second cathartic event in my life. To be able to spend several days en femme would be a dream come true. I decided to attend, and as part of the whole experience I decided to incorporate a trip to Glamour Shots for a makeover and professional photo session. This idea had become an obsession for me ever since encountering some devastatingly beautiful pictures on a website created by Tiffany Michelle. This beautiful southern belle became my virtual inspiration.

LL: Tell us about the Glamour Shots trip.

AR: When I called I'm sure my voice was quavering as I asked if they were willing to work with transgendered individuals. I waited for the answer for what seemed an eternity but was probably really only 1 or 2 seconds. "Sure, no problem! We've had a couple of ladies in here before." Relief flooded my being. I made an appointment for the Pocono weekend.

I was feeling pretty proud of myself for having taken this step so in my euphoric state I also decided that if I was going to have pictures taken and then spend the whole weekend dressed, I needed to have a great set of nails. I called my local salon, where I sometimes get my wigs done and made a morning appointment with the nail stylist for my first set of professionally applied nails.

LL: Well, you had things pretty well planned. How did it go?

AR: After getting my family off to work and school, I proceeded to get myself ready to face the world as Amanda. I chose to wear a purple silk blouse, black jeans and black low-heeled shoes.

I arrived right on time and was ushered back to the manicurist. She complimented me on my look and asked if I had ever been there before. I told her I had been there on several occasions to have my hair done and purchase wigs, but that this was the first time I had ever had my nails done. She was very understanding and did wonders to calm my nerves. All the while we chatted about friends and family. The other women in the salon were very friendly and chatty as well. I should say here that I realize just how fortunate I am to have such an accepting place to go for these services.

LL: Now you were on your way to new territory, having never been to Glamour Shots before. What kind of shape were you in?

AR: I was definitely nervous and did not want to add being lost to the mix. I called them from my cell phone just to confirm the directions. When I arrived they handed me a questionnaire and a couple of three ring binders with pictures in them and asked me to have a seat. I was asked to fill out the questionnaire and take a look through the photos in the binders to get an idea of the type of look I wanted for my shoot. The questionnaire contained general information on how I heard about them, had I ever been there before, and the like. It also asked me to select four outfits for my shoot.

LL: Were you getting calmed down by this point?

AR: For the most part I was just trying to contain the waves of paranoia going through me as I sat there. I filled out the questionnaire and glanced through the photos. While my stylist/photographer Penny reviewed my questionnaire I was asked to step into a changing booth, remove my blouse and put on one of the tube tops that they provide for you. They do





this so that your own top will not get any makeup on it and you can easily change into the various tops you will be wearing in the shoot.

After removing my makeup (they do your makeup) I selected the four outfits I would be wearing. Then Penny sat me down in a chair began transforming me. We chatted about friends and family while she worked. It was a very enjoyable

and relaxing experience.

After makeup we went into a small room at the back of the shop where the camera and backdrops were set up. As glamorous as the outfits look in photos, what really happens is that you drop the tube top down around your waist and wrap the new glamour outfit around your shoulders. They have lots of jewelry you can mix and match with each outfit. We had a great time picking out earrings and getting ready for each shot. They take four shots of each outfit, sixteen photos in all.

LL: How did you enjoy your foray into modeling?

AR: Getting into the desired pose makes you feel more like a contortionist than a super model. Penny made me feel at ease throughout the whole process, either by cracking jokes or by telling me how well she thought the shots were coming out. It lasted about 20 or 30 minutes.

LL: Were you pleased with the results?

AR: My Glamour Shots experience will always be my most exciting photo shoot. There's nothing like it.

LL: All this was just preparation for the really big adventure. Tell us about the Poconos.

AR: It was 90 miles or so to the Pocono outing and I was both nervous and excited. The moment I walked in the feeling of friendship and welcome was overwhelming. Here were people experiencing total freedom, some for the first time ever in their lives. I don't think I've ever seen so many permanent smiles in my life.

LL: What did you enjoy most?

AR: The first evening I was sitting there and across the room I saw a very familiar face. Tiffany Michelle, my inspiration from the Internet, was there in the same room with me! It was just too cosmically coincidental to be believed. I mustered up the courage to introduce myself and we got to talking. She turned out to be one of the sweetest people on the planet. I'm proud to say that we have become good friends.

At the talent show on Saturday night I mustered up my courage and lip synched one of my favorite songs. I was shaking like a leaf. My new friends gave me the support and encouragement I needed though and got me through it. Now I'm a shameless spotlight addict. The ultimate dream come true was participating in the "Princess of the Poconos" pageant. I was fortunate enough to be awarded the title of "Princess of the Poconos." I'm still in a permanent state of elation.

LL: What about that weekend affected you most?

AR: By far the most important thing I brought home from that weekend was friendship. I made what I hope are lifelong bonds with people, sisters that I truly can count on to be there for me, and who can in turn count on me to be there for them. If you're reading this girls, I love you!

Prior to attending my first Paradise In The Poconos, I had become sort of a recluse. I had stopped going to support meetings and really did not have any interaction with others in the community. That has all changed now! I've become a regular attendee at Renaissance monthly meetings. It's a wonderful support group that has several chapters and affiliates in my area. I have continued to develop new friendships through this association.

LL: What about outside of your Renaissance activities?



**There's more
Amanda on
page 17.**



AR: We have a pretty close knit group of about 8 or 10 girls that get together. We go out to clubs to see drag shows and the like. More interestingly though, we also get together for dinner parties and other occasions with our wives and SO's. These events don't always involve dressing. It's been very beneficial to have other couples to relate to and discuss things freely with. Also, our little group tries to get together about once a month for a "guys night out." We meet somewhere in drab and talk about manly things... like mascara, lip-gloss and photo techniques. It's great to get to know the "real" person behind the wig and foundation.

LL: You are a member of The Vanity Club. Tell us about that.

AR: A dear friend, Vicki Rene, is president of The Vanity Club which is a unique group of girls that formed an online sorority about 3 years ago. The idea is a virtual organization based upon "individual freedom of expression, and the emulation (or attainment) of womanhood, but always maintaining the highest possible standards of beauty, elegance, glamour and sophistication..." It is non-political. We don't espouse any particular point of view other than a feminine one. We do have membership encompassing the entire transgender/transsexual spectrum. Our membership is now at about 225 girls and growing. We share so many things with each other, from our personal trials and tribulations to makeup and clothing tips. It's really like having 200 plus sisters located all over the world.

LL: How did Vicki help you, besides getting you connected to the Vanity Club?

AR: Through her skills my web presence was born. She helped me put together a web-site. (Amanda's Transgender Garden, <<http://www.geocities.com/westhollywood/heights/9487/>>). I've since developed my own skills and have redesigned and maintain the site myself. I want it to

truly be a resource for those people who are kind enough to visit.

LL: Any other Net stuff going on in Amanda's life?

AR: I subscribe to a great e-zine called TG Forum. It comes out weekly and has all sorts of valuable resources. In 1998 I was fortunate enough to win a contest and be Miss TG Forum. As a result of that experience I was offered the chance to do some modeling for a company that designs clothing for t-girls.

LL: Once you get a girl into modeling you just can't make her quit. How did this modeling assignment come about?

AR: The company wanted a new face and JoAnn Roberts suggested to them that I might fit the bill. When they asked me, I deliberated for all of about 30 seconds and then said yes. This was every girl's dream come true! I was absolutely electric with excitement!

LL: It sounds as if you got the whole model experience. Tell us every detail.

AR: I was transformed at the retailer's store around 3 in the afternoon by a fabulous makeup artist. It was an incredible experience. I don't think I've ever looked better! The photographer just encouraged me to have fun with it. He said that we'd be working to feature the clothes more so than my facial features so there was going to be a lot of posing directions given to me.

I'm used to working hard and I'm no wimp, but I must tell you, this experience gave me a new respect for a model's stamina. We shot outfit after outfit for nearly 5 hours! It was at the same time the thrill of a lifetime and one of the most exhausting things I've ever done.

LL: After learning what a grueling grind modeling can be, would you do it again?

AR: In a New York second, baby! With any luck I just might get the opportunity.

LL: What's the greatest thing about being Amanda?

AR: I have to say that my life as Amanda has taken me to places I never would have imagined when I tried on that first pair of pantyhose. It has been a great source of enrichment for me. The challenges are real. I have my wife, a beautiful son, a career and a house to tend to. It's not easy, but good things seldom are. I wouldn't trade in my pumps for anything.

LL

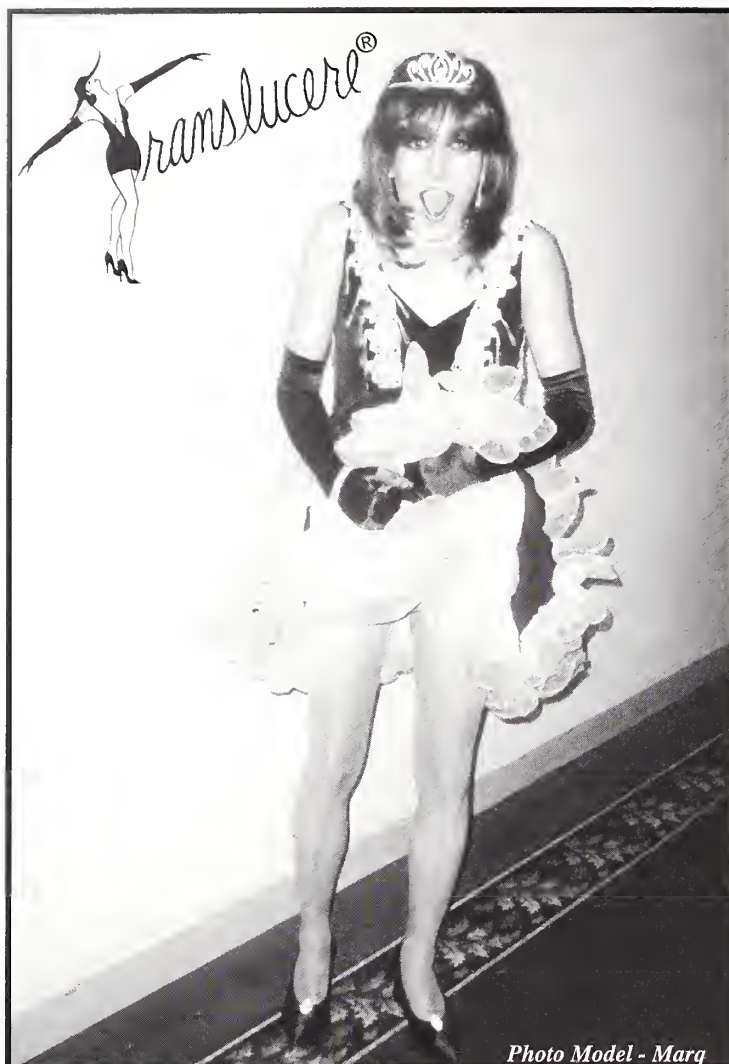


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Letters



Loves the magazine!

Hi, my name is Stephanie Lane! I've been dressing since February '97. I'm 34, 5' 11", 190 pounds and my stats are: 38C-30-36, I wear a 14-16 dress and 11 wide or 12 shoes. I recently purchased LadyLike and I'm very please with it! I got into dressing after buying an issue of Transformation. I kept seeing it at the local adult store I go to. For the last 7 to 8 months I also saw LadyLike and finally decided to buy one. I have #36 and will continue to buy more. I love the cover photo of Linda K. She's very beautiful and looks so natural. Reading her story of how she started dressing, stopped, then began again, and how her wife dealt with it is so inspiring to many others going through similar trails.



Stephanie

I go out shopping day and night and to clubs, and have a nearby donut shop and CVS I drive to mostly at night. The workers are very friendly and nice as I always act and present myself as a lady. I've learned it's mainly attitude when being your femme self and not to worry what others think. Even when I do get read by someone I just stand my ground and go about my business and most won't care too much. I have man friends who love and support me and accept me for what's inside. I live with my mom (my dad passed away in '97) and we are very close despite her dislike of my dressing. She hasn't seen me and I don't plan on showing her but she has come to accept it as she knows I'll do what I want.

I think your magazine is great! I will continue to buy LadyLike. LadyLike is very well put together and very professional. I'm gonna close for now but LadyLike has a new admirer and customer. I will be looking forward to the

next issues to come. I hope you find my photos worth printing in your mag. Take care and be well. Love to all sisters out there and remember, don't let anyone hold you back from doing and being the person you are inside! Attitude girls!

Love Stephanie Lane
21 Riverside Ave., Norwalk, CT 06850

It's Not The End Of The World

Hey you two! I know it's been awhile, but here I am again, with more photos of course. I never got the chance to write and tell JoAnn how much my wife and I enjoyed our second trip to Paradise in the Poconos (Nov. '98). The new place was great! It was so nice to meet up with all the friends we made the previous years, and make new friends as well. I regret to say, we won't be able to attend this year. With both of us having new jobs, we have very little time off.

I loved LL #37 (misabeled #36)! Another great issue! I must admit my favorite parts were the first and last pages. Angela's editorial and JoAnn's "On My Mind."

I sure you don't remember, but you published a letter from me in LL #31. I was inspired by the editorial Angelo wrote in LL #29, in short, a part of the editorial was about closets. It opened my eyes. At the time I wrote that letter, my wife had only recently found out and supported my dressing, but I was still reluctant to go out in public. I was so closeted! Well 2 years, and two Poconos weekends later, I thought I'd give you an update on my progress.

Our first Pocono weekend in Sept. '97 was a real booster to me, since I had never been out in public. I was so scared walking into that reception on the first day. It

only took 5 minutes before I was completely at ease, and was soon joking and laughing with new friends. We made so many friends, we had to come back again in '98.

Before attending Poconos '98, my wife and I found a local transgender group here in our town of Calarada Springs, Cal., named SCIRTS. All the friends we had made at Poconos '97 mostly lived on the East Coast. We kept in touch via email, but we felt it was time to meet transgenders in our own neck of the woods. We've made a lot of friends at SCIRTS. I've been getting out in public dressed now for the last 7 months. It's only once or twice a month, mostly to bars, parties, or other events.

The point is that I don't care now if I pass or not. Although most people think I am a woman, I'm not afraid to return the stare of someone who has read me, and give them a big smile. To think it all started with Angela's editorial. Thank you so much Angela!

I still keep closeted with my family, old friends and neighbors. I don't care to share this part of me with them. The difference now is, if one of them discovers me out in public, or through the grapevine, it's not the end of the world. With the love and support of my wife, and new friends, it wouldn't destroy me. Love me or leave me is my attitude now. If you can't accept it, well, no one is forcing you to hang around. If you can, that's cool; let's talk.

This situation hasn't happened yet, but if it does, I'm not afraid of it anymore. I'm 41 years old and have spent most of my life foolishly in the closet. Life is too short to worry about what other people think. I'm glad, even though it came late, to take a few steps out of the closet.

That's my update, and this letter is getting very long and I've already taken up a lot of your time. Thanks again.
P.J., P.O. Box 9038, Colo. Spgs., CO. 80932



Just Out and Needs Help

How are you doing? Fine I hope. I've been reading your fine publication for years. My name is Regina. I've been dressing forever but here lately I've been getting pretty serious about my transformation. My wife and I divorced a year ago over my dressing. I would love to start hormones and electrolysis but I just came out of the closet. I need some help. Some words of encouragement. My family has just about disowned me and treat me like I have the plague. If you could print my letter and publish my photos maybe somebody would write and I could talk.

Love ya, Regina

Angela replies: I'm always amazed that people feel

continued on page 13

LadyLike



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Letters...

they have to take hormones and get electrolysis to "get serious" about crossdressing. If you are transsexual then you should be seeing a therapist to start your journey into womanhood. If you are a transvestite then you should be having fun dressing when it is appropriate, without ignoring your male responsibilities, and integrating your life. You are in a vulnerable state, just divorced, family all against you. You may see living fulltime as a woman to be same kind of salvation. It's not. You will have all the problems you have now and a whole lot more. Stop for a moment and consider what you really want. If you want to have fun enfemme, go ahead. If you want to escape from your life into your femme self, that may not be such a good plan. Contact a support group in your area, get to know other TG ladies.

Wants The "Op"

My name is Devon and I've just recently stumbled on to *LadyLike* magazine and it has been a total relief to know how many people are actually like me. Your magazine is great and I'm getting ready to send in my subscription. I'm hoping you will please put my photos in both *Mirror Mirror* and letters. I'm seriously considering the operation, but would like to learn more about it and the side effects of hormones, so I'm enclosing my address for anyone to contact me.

Devon Lomae, 215N Pickowoy St.,
Circleville, OH 43113



Angela replies: Again, it might be a good idea to get out of the house before considering "the operation." Dressing up is fun and it makes us feel good. So, we want to do it more and more. That doesn't mean you're a candidate for gender reassignment. That road is long, painful and hard. If you're truly transsexual then you have to go down that road. If you're not it could be your biggest mistake ever. Find a local support group and meet some people. Talk to a gender knowledgeable therapist.

Jennifer



Has A New Name

First of all enclosed is my check for \$32 to renew my subscription. Also enclosed are some photos, the first I've sent in probably ten years. Recently my wife has been helping me with both makeup and photography and the results are so much better. Although she doesn't understand (and I can't say I do either, completely) her help and support mean more than words can say. It's so nice not having to feel guilty or afraid.

Also, I've decided to adopt a new name. From now on my femme self will be Jennifer Johns.

I have been experimenting with the double exposure feature on my camera and I've enclosed the best one so far. If it is suitable for publication maybe you could start a "sisters" page. Thanks for a well done magazine.

Jennifer Johns (Formerly Lorraine.)

Having two of you is twice as nice.

Loves Her New Cleavage

Thank you so much for running my recent photo in the *Mirror-Mirror* section. And because I have a subscription it came automatically! I have purchased from your adver-



tiser [Classic Curves], a product called the Diva, which when used can help to create a very sexy cleavage. Combined with the makeup tips from JoAnn [Roberts], I was so happy with the results.

So, I've included another two photos. Please select one (or 2) if you feel you can. Again, I'll include my address as my response continues to be very active. I've met some new girl friends and written to a lot of new girls.

So thanks so much for the great publication. Also your Profile with Sarah was outstanding. She is so beautiful.

Thanks again,

JoAnn Worth, PO Box 1776, Tempe, AZ 85280

Wants To Correspond

I read and enjoy your publication very much. My name is Manique and I live in fabulous Las Vegas. I have dressed for as long as I can remember. I was married to an absolutely beautiful woman for 13 years, but like all good things it ended when she found out about my passion. I love to shop and I have a huge wardrobe. I am also a fanatic about posing for the camera. I am sharing some of my most recent pics in hopes that you might consider publishing them. Not bad considering I'm pushing the tender young age of 40. I love to correspond with others in the community and would enjoy hearing from your readers. Thanks and I will continue enjoying your magazine.

Hugs, Manique

6185 S. Pecos #136, Las Vegas, NV 89120

Such a pretty girl, too bad she doesn't seem to smile. Manique, take a tip from JoAnn in Tempe and show your fun femme side with a big smile. Keep smiling and soon you'll be working as a show girl on the strip.

continued on page 15

Monique



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Letters...

Wants More Themes

Just received the latest, long awaited *LadyLike* #36 and as usual the world stood still until I read it cover to cover. Then I thought to myself, "wait a minute...didn't I read #36 last time?" Sure enough, seems we made a little "boo-boo" on the issue number, huh? No matter, it was great reading as always, though I am sure I speak for all your readers in wishing the magazine come every month (don't roll your eyes at me you two). I know about the costs and time involved for each issue as many, many years ago I did a monthly 32-page newsletter for a club. This was before computers and I did all the layout by hand with the help of a typewriter. It normally consumed about 100 hours of my "free" time each month—not easy when one normally works 80 hour weeks.



Brenda

Enclosed is my renewal for 3 more years of *LadyLike*. I guess that tells you my feelings toward the magazine, for every photo you print shows a lovely lady who, like a butterfly, has come out of her cocoon (closet) for all to enjoy. I have dropped my subscription to that "other" TG magazine due to its ever increasing porno content (not my thing) and the horrible typos that make every writer look like a grade school dropout. Your renewal notice mentioned a rate increase in the future—go for it. Just maintain the high standards of good taste that you've established.

Also mentioned in this issue was a new "Hot Bobes" idea. This could be a continuing series as most of us have other interests as well as squeezing into dresses. Since I collect toy cars and trucks and love building scale models of the same, we could have a "HOT BABES IN TOYLAND" photo run. Or a "HOT BABES IN GARDENING", or any of dozens of themes. Run it by the troops and see what they

think. I've enclosed some photos of me showing some of my other interests. I often combine these things by shopping for toys en femme (a real blast). These "Hot Bobe" ideas might be easier on those who are closeted and couldn't risk standing outside for all the world to see next to a cor.

I sure have enjoyed the many letters and new friendships that have developed from my pictures running in *LadyLike*, though I am stunned by the number of bi-guys that respond to them. I just can't praise you enough for the way the magazine looks of late.

lots of hugs, Brenda (of The North)

JoAnn replies: Thanks for all the kudos, Brenda. We're going to have same mare "Hot Babe" features in the future. See my editorial for the next theme.

Tale Of Petticoat Punishment

I am a married, 59 year old TV who has been dressing for about 50 years. It started about age 8 or 9 with "petticoat punishment." My father said when he was a child his parents punished him by making him wear his sister's dress and it was now my turn! If I was bad, I was to wear my sister's dress—and I could still go out and play if I wanted to. (Who would leave the house this way! I was really "grounded.")

The next time I was bad it took both my mom and dad to get me into a dress, which I had to wear to dinner and all evening. Also, I had to keep MY dress in my closet as a reminder. The next time I had to get dressed by myself—and I better be quick! It didn't seem as bad this time even though I had to wear it all day Saturday.

I sort of become used to it. I guess dad knew, because the next time he figured I needed to be more of a sissy. Mom set out panties, slip, shoes with little socks. I had to dress myself and show them my underwear. As I was getting dressed I was looking in the mirror and felt a strange sensation all over my body. I really liked the look and the feeling! I really liked being punished and looked in the mirror many times that day. I still had to keep my "naughty" outfit in my closet, but now I wore it anytime I was alone. I guess my mother knew because she told me she put a new dress in my closet "as a reminder to behave." It was a black jumper with a white blouse. She also put a new slip, panties, and some big girl shoes. I was no longer punished, but still dressed any time I was alone. Mom never said anything, but my clothes were washed and ironed whenever they needed it.

I stopped dressing for two years after getting married. One night I really felt the need and told my wife the whole story—not knowing how she would react. To my surprise, she said she would like to see what I would look like, and would even help! She let me wear her square dance dress with the pettipants, stiff petticoat, etc.

By the time I was dressed and made up, we both knew I was really excited! She said as long as that's what I like and we both have fun, let's do it! She even bought

me shoes the following day. Now, even after 35 years, I still come home about twice a month and find a full set of cloths laid out—and I still love every minute of it!

I have never been out of the house, but would sure love to! Someday I would love to attend "Paradise." Do any of the girls bring their wives and what is their feeling about being there? Also, do most arrive in drob and then change for the activity? I would be interesting if you could write about a scored first timer and detail from arrival to departure.

Beverly in Mass.

Bev—Well, some of the ladies who attend Paradise in The Poconos do bring their significant others and they all seem to have a pretty good time. People arrive in various states. Some arrive en femme and stay that way all weekend. Others arrive as scruffy fellas who quickly disappear to be replaced in an hour or two by a femme beauty. As far as the scared first timers, most of them are. If you want to know more about that you should book yourself into the next event.

TVideo Review Is Treat

Enclosed is my subscription renewal for *LadyLike*. I have enjoyed reading *LadyLike* ever since I found issue #8, and enjoy the stories, interviews, and photos! I was especially interested when the TVideo Reviews started as there are a lot of interesting movies out there that I had never heard of before. The TVideo Reviews are like finding a new cookie jar with new treats to sample, and what's inside is very entertaining.

I have met some wonderful girls through your publication, and look forward to meeting more. While I am still somewhat in the closet the door seems to be opening wider day by day. Keep up the good work.

Sincerely yours, Heather, Ore.

Admires & Wants To Meet TGs

I recently picked up a copy of *LadyLike* Magazine—Issue # 36—and was really impressed. Although I used to occasionally dress through my teens, now in my thirties I am strictly on an "admirer." (Why that is, I have no idea.)

In your editorial in Issue # 36, you discuss cross-dresser "clubs" as one way transgendered people can get out of the closet. In a future issue, could you possibly include a column addressed to the best ways admirers can meet someone? My only alternatives here in New York seem to be pick-up bars I'd prefer not to go to—chock full of hustlers who are only interested in compensated "dates"—and some sleazy correspondence magazines.

It'd be great to go to a mixer-type event, but it seems like the only events that get publicized are basically limited to or directed at "girls," which is understandable since the girls are trying to work out their own issues among like minds. In a way, I think admirers, who are isolated to begin with, are left out in the TV/TG scene!

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Letters...

Ms. Roberts' comment about there being two types of admirers was pretty interesting. My thoughts on the subject are that the two groups you identified are not separate, but rather one and the same. Many admirers who enter into sexual relationships with crossdressers are, in a sense, acting out vicariously, too. Something—probably a deep-seated repression or guilt—would never allow them to approach such a relationship from a "female" or homosexual perspective.

So, as an admirer, they're able to remain in a sort of "traditional" male role. I suspect that the only difference between the two groups [Ms. Roberts] identified is that some people, for whatever reason, ultimately are compelled to act on their urges. Or, some people's feelings are so repressed, that they can't even contemplate, consciously or unconsciously, such a relationship as an admirer. (I apologize if this is a little more complicated than you would have cared to have read.)

Any comments or advice you or your staff can offer in a future issue would be welcome. Also appreciated would be a mention of any events that are devoted in whole or in part to interaction between girls and their admirers.

Please continue to put out what is a terrific magazine!

Very truly yours, Robert

PS: I really would like to write to Alison Ward whose photo appeared in #36 on page 25, but whose address is incomplete.

Angela replies: Meeting anyone to date can be tough enough but with the added TG factor it can be down right impossible. All I can say is there are plenty of ladies out there who aren't hustling and would welcome the attentions of a gentleman admirer. If you go where the ladies are and act like a gentleman at all times you should eventually get a real date. Good luck.

JoAnn replies: I think Robert's point about being left out of the TG community is well taken. We take great pains to make a place for partners and spouses of heterosexual transgendered people, but what do we do for homosexual TGs and their partners? We'd think nothing of signing up a GG to attend a TG event looking for a partner. What about the admirer who is looking for a partner? Doesn't that person have a right to find happiness too?

One problem is, as many of us have experienced, that some of the admirers don't know how to take "No" for an answer. They can sometimes get pretty obnoxious.

I think the answer to Robert's dilemma is to attend one of the larger events, like Southern Camfart, that has a wide variety of people, with all sorts of appetites, wants, and needs. If he's going to find a partner anywhere, it's be there.

BTW, here's Alison's complete address.



Alison Word, PO Box 21963,
Beaumont TX 77720

Like Really Large Breasts

Please renew my subscription to LadyLike for one year. I finally have a couple decent photos that are really me. I have been dressing totally on my own since last summer. No help from boutiques or help anywhere so I am a little proud. I'm 6'1", 220 lbs. One big Princess here, but I absolutely love dressing. Hoping to get rid of my breasts made from water balloons and Lycra spandex and get some lovely breast forms from one of those boutiques down in Southern California. It's a mere 1700 mile round trip, but worth the drive.

Hey! Trying to walk like a lady with 42 DD balloons filled with water is a trick. It's the "splishy-splash-swaash" noise that drives 'em crazy. When they ask, I just tell them I'm lactating real heavy to feed triplets.

Talk about real jiggle and life-like bounce! I've got it. If I were stranded in the desert I could keep a family alive for a week. I've had to add a light steel cable to my bra straps to keep up the support. I had one go out on me in a plus-size shop the other day in a nice part of the mall. Everyone started staring, so I yelled "My God, my water broke!" The clerk came to my aide, but I had to get out of there. (Was I lying?)

I would give my left "water balloon breast form" to be able to spend a week or even a day with sisters. I crave the experience. If I am lucky enough and you have space,

could you print one of my photos? I would be grateful.

We do want to see ourselves. I find anything relating to acceptance does stir the heart. I have been taking Phyta-Estragen and stealing my wife's estragen supplements. I have been going out shopping a whole lot lately and having trips to Indian Casinos where I am treated well. I feel so fantastic dressed. I have been able to dress all day and night for multiple days lately. It is so great!

Enough yakking, Love Ya.

Christine Velmer, PO Box 133, Riddle, Ore 97469



JoAnn replies: Now that's a funny letter! But Christine, why go all the way to L.A. just for breastforms? There are plenty of shops up your way in the great Northwest that would help you out.

What you need to do is contact a support group up your way and make some connections with other people. In fact, there's a great event called Esprit up your way that happens in May each year. Go check it out.

Meanwhile, lay off the wife's estragen. That's a great way to end up with an embolism or stroke. Never, ever take a prescription hormone without being under a doctor's care. Just because it's right for your wife is no guarantee it is right for you. I personally knew someone who died from taking hormones unsupervised. Believe me, we cherish every LadyLike subscriber, so please do yourself a favor and stop.



More Amanda



**We had so
many great
photos of
Amanda we
had to share
more with
you.**



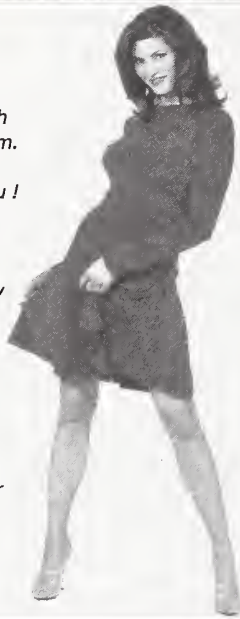
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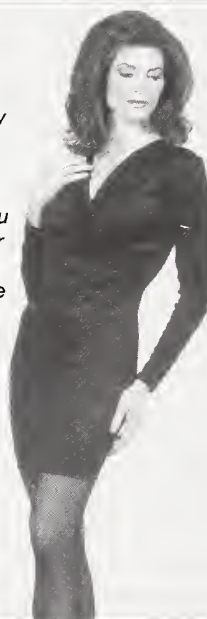
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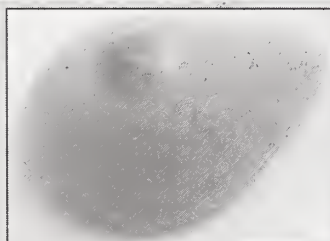
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▲ Wigstock always draws a huge crowd.



All photos by Leslie

◀ Our Editrix, Ms. Gardner, in summery attire.

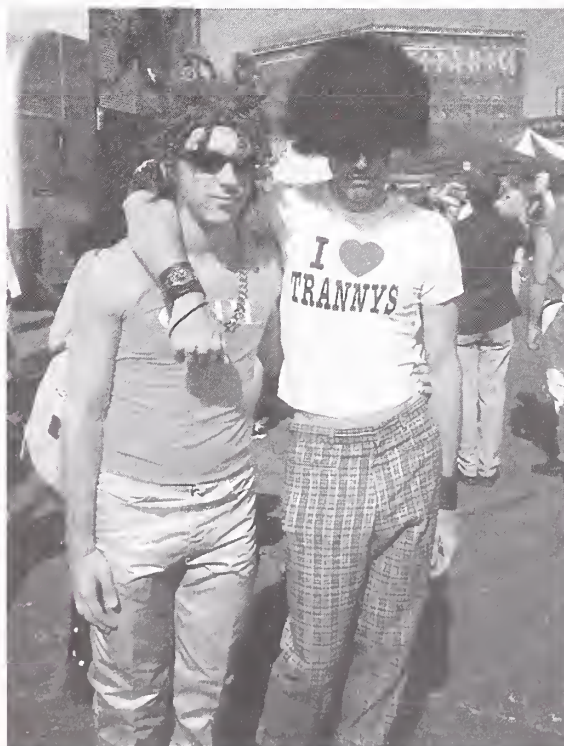
Think that's big hair? Turn the page. ▼



Jeez, they look anything but happy. C'mon, lighten up! ▼



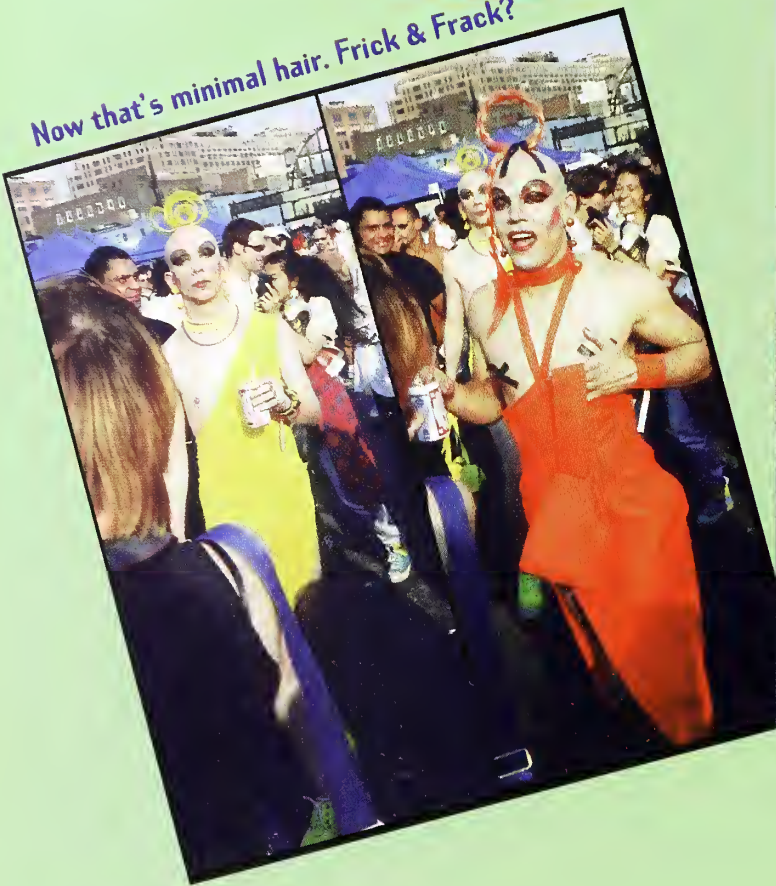
▲ And, you are liable to see just about anything!



More, next page ►

Wigstock!

Now that's minimal hair. Frick & Frack?



American Gothic for Y2K?

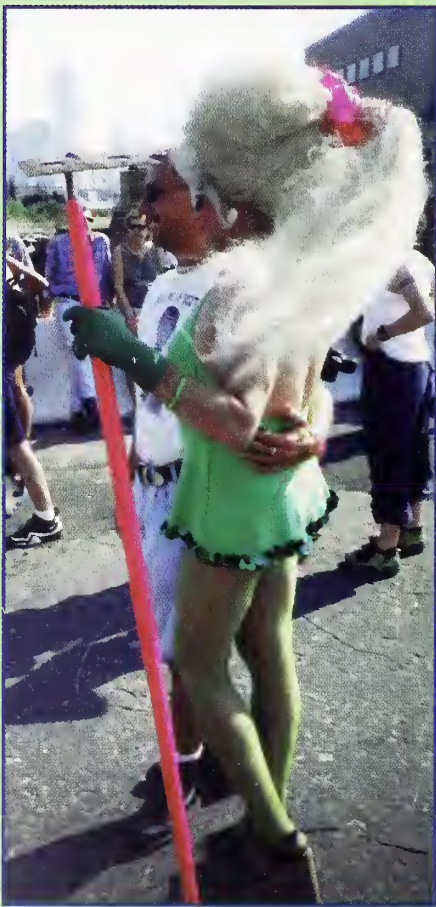


▲ Hey lady, I'd see a doctor about those spider veins.



▲ And more bigger hair.

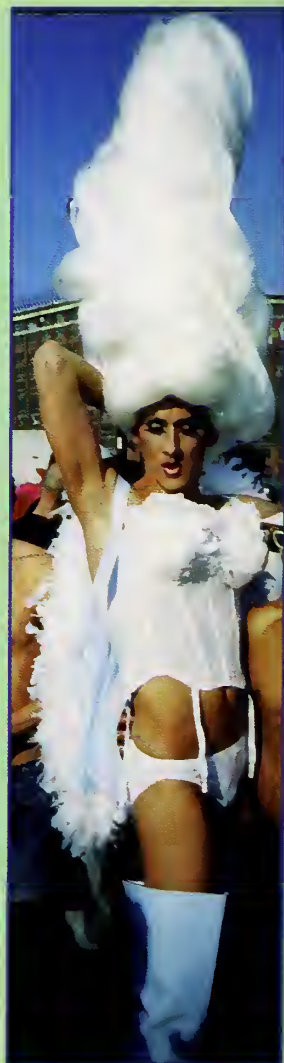
▼ This is bigger hair.



▲ This is big hair and it's just the beginning.



And probably the biggest hair of the event goes to this fine specimen of femininity.





▲ Proof that some Queens are shallow.

▼ Everybody gets into the swing of things.



▲ Not all the drag is over the top. That might be Mother Nature in the center, but those other two are pretty hot babes.

Then there's this fella.. er.. gal... ah, whoever! Wonder if Bo Peep knows where her sheep got to?



See what taking street 'mones will do to you? ▼

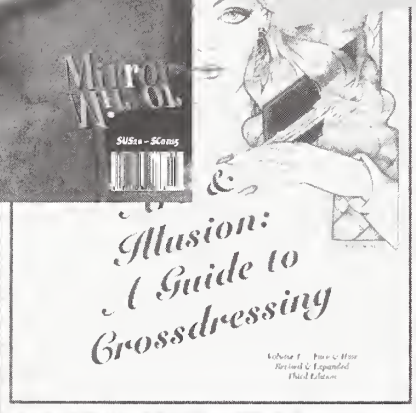
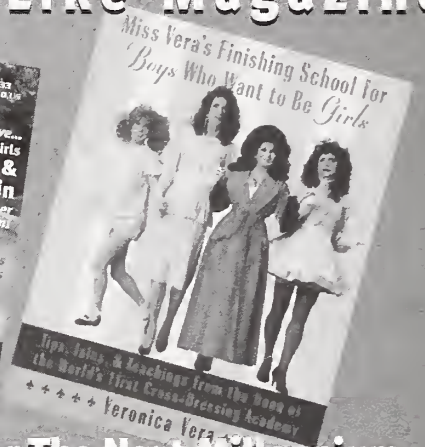
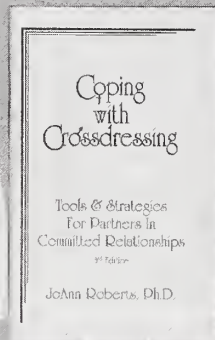


Shirl, I don't think this is Tavern On The Green!



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WA 98109

▲ Darlene
Franz, POB
2025, Decatur
GA 30031
wf7100@aol.com



▲ Kay, Wheeling Ill.

Mirror Mirror



▲ Bobbie Dee, POB 3690,
Long Beach CA 90803



▲ Joy Kamei from L.A. was
the first to correctly
identify Jeri Jones from our
little contest last issue



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▲ Carlotta, POB 222,
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Dee Sinclair, POB
550384, Davie FL
33355

▶ René M, Calif.
renee@tgforum.com



▶ Priscilla,
Chicago, Ill.
FWD107

◀ Kristen S, PMB177
360-23 W Schick
Rd., Bloomingdale
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▲ Christine Velmer,
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Bianna
FWD3219

Photo Secrets from a Pro

by Guys as Dolls Photographer Lauri Flaquer

We've all opened a magazine and seen an absolutely gorgeous photo of some breathtaking creature peeking out of what looks like Eden. Hair may be askew, make-up non-existent, clothing, not exceptional, but the photo reaches out and grabs you with such power that you can barely turn the page. It all looks so natural...

Creating the Glamour

The reality is that a team of highly trained professionals with years of experience worked many months to get your attention and hopefully motivate you to purchase their product. Each detail of these shoots is carefully planned and organized to ensure the desired results. Here we'll discuss some of the methods used by professionals to create those dazzling photos.

Fabulous photos don't just happen. They are a creation. I'd like to help you create the photos of your dreams. Our situation may be slightly different but with careful planning and organization we can be just as successful. The following are some tips that I've used to create "unbelievably believable" photographs of crossdressers. Some of these ideas may not be for you. Use the ones you want and leave the rest. I'm sure that just by reading the article you'll get a much better idea about how great photos are created.

Posing for the Camera

The key is to accentuate the curves of the body. Posing slightly to the side

will help add curves in "all the right places" and create the illusion of a more svelte figure.

Avoid posing straight on to the cam-



Princess Janaé accentuates her curves by posing to the side.

era. A slight angle will accentuate the softness of the features and produce a more attractive photo. When posing full length, place one foot in front of the other, slightly bending the knee of the front leg while keeping your weight on the back leg. This will help to give a more graceful illusion. Try placing the front foot towards the camera. Experiment with different looks that can be created by positioning the feet at 45 degree angles and distributing

the weight unevenly. The uneven distribution of weight will create the "S curve" that is so attractive in photos. A "swan neck" is very important to maintain during the photo session. It is created by keeping the back very straight, elongating the neck and dropping the chin slightly forward. It feels awkward but looks lovely in photos.

Keep the back straight and tall when posed seated. Try resting your weight slightly on one butt-cheek while lifting the other to create the illusion of a more feminine physique. GG's are constantly scrutinized and coached by female relatives about how to move, sit, stand and act like a lady. This takes place practically from birth. The constant goal is for feminine behavior and ladylike movements. With practice you can catch up on this training by posing in front of a mirror. Photos will actually help you to check your progress and record your successes.

Magazines are loaded with lots of great shots. Spend some time analyzing what you like about the shots that are featured and determine which looks could work for you. Gathering this information will put you in touch with your personal preferences as well as help you develop your own personal style. Understanding these preferences will increase your chances of having photos that you absolutely love.

Practice some of these poses in front of the mirror before the photo shoot. This may give you some insight into what works for the camera and what doesn't. Study your look for quite awhile. What do you see? Is this the illusion that you've been trying to create? Let your eye travel from head to toe. Does everything work together nicely, or is there one feature that steals the show? Does that work or

not? Keep in mind your own personal style when doing this exercise. Are you creating the desired illusion? Don't be afraid to try a variety of poses, with a little perseverance you'll discover what works for you. It's amazing how subtle changes affect the illusion.

Fashion Tips

Bring your favorite clothing and accessories. Try to avoid white and black clothing since photos look great with lots of color. Choosing bright, clear, colors will produce a more vibrant photo.

Your best bets are blues, reds, pinks and purples. Yellow is striking as an accent but may be too bold for large pieces. If your signature look is dark colors consider brightly colored scarves or jewelry to add some color. Dainty accessories and prints may get completely lost in the photos. Work towards creating strong, somewhat bold, fashion statements to make your pictures stand out and hopefully express some part of your personality.

Think in terms of complete "ensembles" clothing, accessories, stockings, shoes etc. Organizing and packing complete outfits together will make it easier to find what is needed quickly; great way to cut down on the chances of forgetting important pieces. When support hose are worn under stockings the look of the leg is dramatically enhanced. This is almost a rule in the entertainment industry. The only drawback will be that it's much hotter with two pairs of stocking than one, but it's well worth it.

Angles and Illusions

Understanding how angles effect the illusion that you're trying to achieve will help you get better photos. A

horizontal angle at the shoulders will create the illusion of wide shoulders. And the same horizontal angle at the hips will help them appear wider, thus balancing the width of the shoulders. Vertical lines will create the illusion of height. Most crossdressers are already tall enough so vertical angles really work against them. Diagonal angles when used properly can create many complimentary illusions. A skirt that's gathered at the waist will create the illusion of a smaller waist, larger hips, and depending on the length, can even reduce the illusion of height. Top that skirt with a large scoop neck top and the illusion will be balanced. Shoulders will seem narrower, features softer, and the eyes will naturally move to the face.

Diagonal angles used the opposite way will work against the crossdresser. Imagine a V-neck top, one that is so wide that the top of the V hits almost at the shoulders. Pair that with a slinky skirt that clings to the body. The illusion here will be wide shoulders and narrow hips. See how the same angles used differently can create such different illusions. Clothing and accessories with asymmetric angles are effective in calling so much attention to the design that the eye focuses on it and not on the body. Remember that this concept could work for or against you, depending on the look you're trying to achieve. V-necks add length, while a round neckline that is close to the face will add width, and a boat neck will broaden the face. Since most GG's have softer features, CD's may want to opt for a scoop neck or a V-neck.

Jewelry

Use appropriate sized jewelry. Barbie wears the same fashions as real

women, only the scale is different. Nothing sets you apart from the crowd like exquisite baubles. Don't be afraid to shimmer and sparkle. Bracelets can be a bit of a problem because the size of a GG's wrist is much smaller than that of a CD. Nevertheless the appropriate bracelet can actually mask the size of the wrist, creating the illusion of a more delicate bone structure. The shapes that work best are ones that have movement. Avoid bangle bracelets, which may accentuate mass. Earrings are very important. They actually bring the focus to the face. Understanding how the different shapes affect the illusion created is very helpful.

A long dangling earring will accen-



Joanne uses jewelry and hair to accentuate her personal style which is glitz and glamour.

tuate the length of the face. A round earring will add width, an earring with a diagonal angle will help give the illusion of a more defined cheekbone, jawbone and often highlight the eyes. Of course, the hairstyle needs to be

continued next page



Rebecca looks like a treasure when we used jewelry in a unique way.

taken into consideration when choosing the earrings.

Consider the neckline of the outfit, hairstyle and the earrings carefully when choosing your necklace. I prefer fewer pieces of larger jewelry and often opt for no necklace with bolder earrings and a fabulous hairstyle. But if you prefer a necklace keep in mind that the angle with which the necklace falls will determine the length or width of the face, and the broadness of the shoulders. Longer is usually better than tight around the base of the neck.

The Art of Styling Wigs and Make-up

If you can at all afford it, have a professional wig styling and make-up application for the day of the shoot. It may seem extravagant but these professionals work hard for you, watching what you cannot see and will greatly improve the quality of your photos. You may also decide to have a trial application before the day of the photos, to be sure that you like your new look. If this is totally out of the budget, consider taking a close friend to help out. It's a great comfort to know that someone is there for you and you may need the extra help.

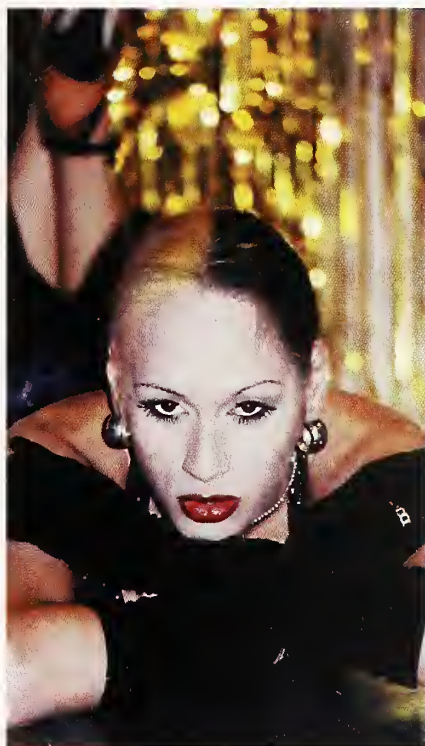
Hair should be styled slightly fuller than street wear. A larger style will help balance the width of the shoulders, while appearing more glamorous. Using a wig cap will help cut down on stray hairs peeking out from under the wig. If you want to use your own hair, it may be a good idea to invest in a good hairpiece. This will increase the variety of styles you'll be able to create while expanding on your own luscious locks. Whatever you decide to do there are a few tips to keep in mind during the shoot. Check for stray hairs under the lights before the shoot begins. Also, use your hand mirror to check for any holes (areas of the hair

that light can be seen through) and cover those. Think in terms on the front and sides of the hairstyle. You may want to borrow the hair from the back of the head to fill in the holes or create more width. Remember a little extra volume never hurt anyone.

The proper make-up application is very important during the photo session. Because the camera and the lights widen and flatten the features, everyone looks 10 to 15 pounds heavier in photos. The proper use of shading and color will help counteract this problem. Extra shading and color are also necessary to stand up to the additional lights used in photography. Just as important as using more color is properly blending the colors. Since any harsh lines will be accentuated more in a still photo, it's a good idea to check the final application "under the lights" before the shoot begins. Blend any harsh angles.



Morgan uses a large professionally styled wig to balance her body size and accentuate her delicate features.



Selica does a beautiful job blending her make-up. The look is intense and at the same time believable

Manicure

Your hands will look beautiful and add grace to the photos.

Remember to bring a small bag of the essential beauty products to keep that gorgeous look fresh and natural. A comb and hairspray will also be necessary.

Props

Don't be afraid to get creative with props. Some of the best photos are created with the addition of something fun. Consider feather boas, fans or parasols; they make you feel great and complete the look. Using what you love will give your photos a personal touch that makes them truly unique. The best photos are an expression of your own personality.

Music

Bring along some of your favorite tunes to relax you and set the mood.

Music is one of the most important tools we use to relax our models and have fun during the shoot.

Speak Up

Don't be afraid to voice ideas before and during the shoot. The photographer has a lot on her/his mind during the shoot, it's possible that they could miss an opportunity for a great shot. If something crosses your mind, don't be shy, speak up. Photographers usually welcome input. Remember that things look very different through the lens of the camera and something that you think looks bad may in reality look great in a photograph.

Start planning the photo session long before the actual setting. Think about what you'd like to accomplish during the session.

Review your previous photos. Ask yourself what do you like about them and what could be improved upon. Try to look beyond your image and study the background, setting, and props. You may want to take these pics to the photographer. It'll be much easier to explain what you're working towards and what you'd rather avoid.

At least two days before the shoot, exercise, drink plenty of water, eat light meals, avoid salt, and greasy foods. This may seem like a lot of work but in reality it's a fun learning experience. Being aware of these tips will not only improve your photos but it'll also help you to achieve a comfort level when dressing for a night on the town.

Don't think of a photo session as a one shot deal. Photos are a record of a specific time. They should be a fun part of the process but not the end all. Don't be too serious about them. Re-

lax, have fun and play with them. If you think about all the little details before the shoot, the day of the shoot will be a wonderful dream come true.

Most Importantly

Smile, smile, smile! There's nothing that draws people to a photo like a beautiful, big open smile.



Janelle is really having fun. Her excitement is captured for all to enjoy.

Next Issue

I will give you tips and hints on how to improve your own snap shots.

Contact Me @

I will be taking photos at the Paradise in the Poconos weekend and am looking forward to seeing everyone there. You can also contact me through our website, Guys As Dolls, <www.guysasdolls.com>.

Resources

North American Support Groups

National US Membership Organizations

International Foundation for Gender Education. PO Box 540229, Waltham, MA 02454. Publishes Transgender Tapestry (\$40/year subscription). Reprints and books on TV/TS subjects, other info. Hosts annual conference in different locations around the country. Phone: 617-899-2212. <ifge@ifge.org><www.ifge.org>

Renaissance Education Association, Inc., 987 Old Eagle School Rd., Suite 719, Wayne, Pa. 19087. 610-975-9119 24 hr. answering machine, but phones are answered personally on Monday and Thursday evenings. Membership fee of \$40 includes a 24-page monthly publication *Transgender Community News*. Also publishes Background Papers and Community Outreach Bulletins on transgender issues for personal and professional use. Speakers available for classroom, corporate, or media discussions of transgender issues. Renaissance currently has four chapters and seven affiliates. Affiliates are noted with "(!)" in the list below. Renaissance is a 501(c)(3) non-profit membership organization. <angela@ren.org> <www.ren.org>

Society for the Second Self (SSS), Box 194, Tulare, CA 93275. Focused on families and relationships. Tri-Ess publishes the *Femme Mirror* quarterly and hosts an annual convention. Tri-Ess chapters are marked with "#" in the list below. Tri-Ess is a non-profit membership organization. <jeftris@aol.com> <www.firstnethou.com/brenda>

Alaska

Alaska T People, c/o Bobbie Wendy Tucey, PO Box 670349, Chugiak, AK 99567

Alabama

Alpha-Zeta (#), PO Box 1738, Tempe, AZ 85280
A Rose, PO Box 8108, Glendale, AZ 85280-8108
Tau Upsilon(#), 8802 E. Broadway Blvd. #145, Tucson, AZ 85710

California

Alpha Chapter(#), PO Box 36091, Los Angeles, CA 90036
Androgyny, PO Box 480740, Los Angeles, CA 90048
Born Free, PO Box 52829, Riverside, CA 92517
CHIC, PO Box 8487, Long Beach, CA 90808
Diablo Valley Girls, PO Box 272885, Concord, CA 94527-2885
Gender Expressions, PO Box 816, Lakewood, CA 90714-0816
Ladies Knight Out, PO Box 19608-179, Irvine, CA 92713
Neutral Corner, PO Box 19008, San Diego, CA 92159
Powder Puffs of California, PO Box 1088, Yorba Linda, CA 92886

Rainbow Gender Association, PO Box 700730, San Jose, CA 95170-0730

Sacramento Gender Assoc., PO Box 215456, Sacramento, CA 95821-1456

Sigma Sigma Beta, Tri-Ess, PO Box 19933, So. Lake Tahoe, CA 96151

TGSF, PO Box 426486, San Francisco, CA 94142

Thursday Irregulars, c/o Joan Sheldon, PO Box 6541, San Jose, CA 95150-6541

Tri Chi (#), PO Box 194, Tulare, CA 93275

Colorado

Delta (#) PO Box 16208, Denver, CO 80216-6208

Gender Identity Center of Colorado, Inc., 1455 Ammons St., Suite 100, Lakewood, CO 80215-4993

Pueblo TV/TS Support Group, 1144 Clarmont, Pueblo, CO 81004-2808

Connecticut

Connecticut Outreach Society, PO Box 163, Farmington, CT 06034

connecticutView, PO Box 2281, Devon, CT 06460

Twenty (XX) Club Inc., PO Box 387, Hartford, CT 06141-0387

District of Columbia

Washington-Baltimore Alliance, PO Box 50724, Washington, D.C. 20091-0724

Delaware

Renaissance (!), Delaware Chapter, PO Box 5656, Wilmington DE 19808

Florida

Animas, PO Box 420309, Miami FL 33242

Gamma Chi Beta (#), PO Box 510045, Punta Gorda, FL 33951-0045

Mu Beta Gamma (#), PO Box 4126, Hialeah, FL 33014

North Florida Sisters (NFS), PO Box 5765, Jacksonville, FL 32247

Phi Epsilon Mu (#), PO Box 3261, Winter Park FL 32790-3261

Tau Lambda (#), PO Box 3426, Tallahassee, FL 32315-3426

The Ladies Club of Florida (TLC), P.O. Box 372711, Satellite Beach, FL 32937

Trans Alliance of Gainesville, PO Box 143102, Gainesville, FL 32614-3102

Georgia

Sigma Epsilon (#), PO Box 272, Rosewell, GA 30077-0272

AGE(!), PO Box 267, Powder Springs, GA 30127

Hawaii

Hawaii Transgender Outreach, PO Box 4530, Honolulu, HI 96812

Iowa

Central Illinois Gender Assoc., PO Box 1925, Clinton, IA 52733-1925

Iowa Artistry, PO Box 75, Cedar Rapids, IA 52406

River City Gender Alliance, PO Box 680, Council Bluffs, IA 51502-0680

Idaho

Idaho Transgender Society, PO Box 7353, Boise, ID 83707-1353

Illinois

Chi (#), PO Box 40, Wood Dale, IL 60191-0040

Chicago Gender Society (!), PO Box 578005, Chicago, IL 60657

Indiana

IXE, PO Box 20710, Indianapolis IN 46250

Transgender Outreach of N. Indiana, Ltd., PO Box 2372, Portage, IN 46368

Kansas

KCCAF (Kansas City Crossdressers & Friends), PO Box 4092, Overland Park, KS 66204

Wichita Transgender Alliance, PO Box 3002, Wichita, KS 67201-3002

Kentucky

BlueGrass Belles, PO Box 20173, Louisville, KY 40250

Louisiana

Gulf Gender Alliance (!), (a Renaissance Chapter) PO Box 56836, New Orleans, LA 70156-6836

Massachusetts

Sunshine Club, PO Box 564, Hadley, MA 01035

TG Support, 36 Alpine Rd, Wayland, MA 01778

Tiffany Club of New England, Inc., PO Box 71, Waltham MA 02454-0071

Maryland

The Bridge Club, c/o Michelle Gerald, PO Box 11737, Baltimore, MD 21206-0337

Tri-State Transgendered Club, c/o Diane Terrant, PO Box 1994, Silver Spring, MD 21150-1002

Maine

Maine Gender Resource & Support, c/o Jean Churchill, PO Box 1894, Bangor, ME 04402-1894

Transsupport, PO Box 17622, Portland, ME 04101

Michigan

Crossroads, PO Box 1245, Royal Oak, MI 48068

Friends North, Inc., PO Box 562, Traverse City, MI 49685-0562

IME of Western Michigan, PO Box 1153, Grand Rapids, MI 49501

Minnesota

Beta Gamma (#), PO Box 8591, Minn., MN 55408

City of Lakes Crossgender Community, PO Box 16265, Minneapolis MN 55416

Minnesota Freedom of Gender Expression, PO Box 17945, St. Paul, MN 55117

Missouri

St. Louis Gender Foundation, PO Box 9433, St. Louis, MO 63117

Mississippi

Beta Chi (#), PO Box 31253, Jackson, MS 39286

North Carolina

Carolina Transensual Alliance (CTA), 4037 E Independence Blvd, Suite 111, Charlotte, NC 28205

Kappa Beta, Tri-Ess, PO Box 12101, Charlotte, NC 28220-2101

Phoenix Transgender Support, PO Box 18332, Asheville, NC 28814

Sigma Rho Delta (#), PO Box 61406, Raleigh, NC 27661

Tau Gamma, PO Box 25282, Raleigh, NC 27611

Triad Gender Association, PO Box 2264, Jamestown, NC 27282-2264

Nebraska

River City Gender Alliance, PO Box 8076, Omaha, NE 68108-0076

Nevada

Equinox, 8175 S Virginia, Suite 850-256, Reno, NV 89511-8981

Transgender Support Las Vegas, Community Counseling Center, 1120 Almond Tree Lane, Las Vegas, NV

New Jersey

Chi Delta Mu (#), PO Box 1, River Edge, NJ 07661-0001

Monmouth Ocean Transgender (!), (a Renaissance Chapter), PO Box 2972, Princeton, NJ 08543-2972

NJ Support, PO Box 0034, Montville, NJ 07045

Sigma Nu Rho (#), 1092 St. Georges Ave., Suite 234, Rahway, NJ 07065-2664

New Mexico

Phi (Fiesta!)(#), 8200 Montgomery NE, #241, Albuquerque, NM 87109

New York

Buffalo Belles, PO Box 1701, Amherst, NY 14226

CD•Network, PO Box 92055, Rochester, NY 14692

Lambda Chi Lambda (#), PO Box 1010,

Cooperstown, NY 13326

continued on next page

Metropolitan Gender Network, 561 Hudson St., Box 45, New York, NY 10014

TGIC, PO Box 13604, Albany, NY 12212-3604

Transgender Network, PO Box 1611 South Road Annex, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601-0611

Ohio

Alpha Omega (#), PO Box 2053, Sheffield Lake, OH 44054-0053

Crossport, PO Box 1692, Cincinnati, OH 45204

Crystal Club, PO Box 287, Reynoldsburg, OH 43068

Paradise Club, PO Box 29564, Cleveland, OH 44129

Oregon

Intermountain Transgender Outreach, 1524 Monroe Ave., La Grande, OR 97850

North West Gender Alliance, PO Box 4928, Portland, OR 97208

Rho Gamma (#), PO Box 5551, Grants Pass, OR 97527

Trans-Port, P.O. Box 66913, Portland, OR 97290

Pennsylvania

Erie Sisters, 1903 West 8th St #261, Erie, PA 16505

Renaissance(!), Greater Philadelphia, 987 Old Eagle School Road, Suite 719, Wayne, PA 19087

Renaissance(!), Lower Susquehanna Valley, PO Box

2122, Harrisburg, PA 17105-2122

Transpitt, PO Box 3214, Pittsburgh, PA 15230

Tennessee

Memphis TransGender Alliance, PO Box 11232, Memphis, TN 38111-0232

Tennessee Vals, PO Box 92335, Nashville, TN 37209

Texas

Alpha Tau (#), PO Box 2753, Cedar Park, TX 78630-2753

Central Texas Transgender Society, PO Box 195, Spicewood, TX 78669

Epsilon Tau (#), PO Box 945, New Waverly, TX 77358

Gulf Coast Transgender Community, PO Box 90335, Houston, TX 77090

Helping Cross Dressers Anonymous, 6804 E Hiway 6 S #334, Houston, TX 77083

Metroplex CD Club, PO Box 141924, Irving, TX 75014-1924

Nu Epsilon Tau (#), PO Box 14096, Pantego, TX 76094

Spouses & Partners International Conference for Education (SPICE), Peggy Rudd, c/o 8880 Bellaire B2 #104, Houston, TX 77036

West Texas Gender Alliance, c/o Tami Maloney, 5350 Llano St., Abilene, TX 79605

Utah

An Engendered Species, PO box 11897, Salt Lake City, UT 84147

Western Transsexuals Support Network, 4667 Holladay Blvd, #2, Salt Lake City, UT 84117

Virginia

Chi Epsilon Sigma (#) c/o PO Box 382, Norge, VA 2317-0382

Ladies First, 7138 Little River Turnpike, Ste 1820, Annandale, VA 22003

Trans-Gender Education Association, PO Box 16036, Arlington, VA 22215

Washington

Bellingham Gender Group, 304 W. Champion, Bellingham, WA 98225

Emerald City, PO Box 31318, Seattle, WA 98103

Ingersoll Gender Center, 1812 E. Madison, Suite 106, Seattle, WA 98122-2843

Wisconsin

Gemini Gender Group, P.O.Box 44211, Milwaukee WI 53214

West Virginia

Trans-West Virginia, PO Box 2322, Huntington, WV 25724

Canada

Alberta

Phi Sigma#, PO Box 81115, 755 Lake Bonavista Dr SE, Calgary, T2J 7C9.

Illusions Club (peer support & info), PO Box 2000, Calgary, T2C 1B4. Phone: +1 (403) 236-7072.

Serenity, Box 81115, 755 Lake Bonavista Dr SE, Calgary, Alberta T2J 7C9

British Columbia

Corbury Society, PO Box 3745, Vancouver, V6B 3Z1, Phone: 604-415-2767.

Zenith Foundation, 8415 Granville Street, PO Box 46, Vancouver, V6P 4Z9.

Ontario

Gender Metaphor, 829 Northwest Road, Suite 715, Kingston, Ontario K7P-2N3.

Gender Mosaic, PO Box 7421, Ottawa, K1L 8E4. Phone: +1 (819) 770-1945

Xpressions, P.O. Box 223, Station A, Toronto, M5W 1B2, Voice mail: +1 (416) 812-6879.

Quebec

Club MET, 4113 Dorion St., Montreal, H2K 3B8. Phone: +1 (514) 528-8874

FACT - Quebec, PO Box 293, 5858 Cote-de-Neiges Boulevard, Montreal, H3S 2S6

Community Calendar

November 1999

4 - 7, Paradise In The Poconos, an extended weekend for CDs in the Pocono mountains with parties, programs and lots of fun. Contact CDS, PO Box 61263, King of Prussia, PA 19406, or call 610-640-9449, or visit <www.cdspub.com/poco.html>

10 - 14, Tri-Ess Holiday En Femme in Houston, Texas. Sponsored by Tau Chi Chapter. Contact Brendas Thomas, 14601 Bellaire #334, Houston Tx or call 281-495-8009. Email <brenda@firstnethou.com>

11 - 14, MAGGIE's 10th Annual Fall Harvest in Milwaukee, WI. For info write: Fall Harvest '99, PO Box 44211, Milwaukee, WI 53214, or call: 414-297-9328, or email fallharvest99@usa.net.

March 2000

22 - 26, Transgender 2000, the 14th annual IFGE convention at the Hilton Crystal City, Arlington, VA. For info contact Cioe Enterprises, PO Box 61, Easton, PA 18044-0061, 610-759-1761.

April 2000

27 - 30, Tenth Anniversary California Dreamin', Golden Gateway Holiday Inn in San Francisco at 1500 Van Ness Avenue. Detailed information can be obtained by writing: PPOC/California Dreamin', PO Box 1088, Yorba Linda, CA 92885, calling (714) 281-0271.

May 2000

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An Interview with Grey Ryder – Part 2

by Ms Bob and Carol Kleinmaier

You'll probably never see a show like the Jewel Box Revue. Not only did the cast feature most of the era's foremost female impersonators, T. C. Jones, Lynne Carter, Ricky Renee, Harvey Lee and Jackie Maye, it also included an emcee who has become an icon for drag kings, male impersonator Storme De Laviere. It was a hard working show, constantly on the road, performing five shows a night, like vaudeville. But all this talent and effort, plus fabulous costumes, original musical arrangements and a script suitable for "family entertainment," weren't enough to keep the show going forever. The Jewel Box Revue closed about 30 years ago and there's precious little of its history available today.

Grey Ryder, the very accommodating subject of this interview, performed with the Jewel Box Revue. Sometimes he was a featured act. Sometimes he was a showgirl in the chorus. He joined the company of 25 female impersonators and one male impersonator in 1961, when he was 20. Before joining the show he'd had only minimal theatrical experience and had never performed in drag. But, as he told us in the last installment, he took the part "cause it was a great way to see the United States." However, after about a year-and-a-half Grey and "The Box" parted company. As he put it, "They just wanted to get rid of me." Let's pick up Grey's story there.

GR: They left me off in New York City. I took a plane in drag to Chicago and went to work as a female impersonator. I performed solo at the Shoreline 7 and a show at the Top of the Town. For about six months I moved my show between about four clubs. It was the same as the Jewel Box. No double entendre. It wasn't as permissive a society back then. I did comedy and lip-sync. These were small clubs. Lip-sync was all they had, but we didn't have tapes then. One of the performers would do a number and the other would run the record machine. It was not very professional.

MB: Were the other female impersonators you worked with gay?

GR: As far as I knew, except for my comedy partner, Billy Austin. He said he wasn't. I never cared or knew. He had been married to a stripper named Shalimar and when he would get very drunk he would cry about Shalimar. She had passed away. He was a very sensitive man.

MB: Do you know if any of the performers were transsexuals? Did any of them live as women?

GR: Not at that time. In The Box you had to be a man. That was a prerequisite. Danny wanted men. We probably would have been fired if we cross-dressed off-stage. I think female impersonation is an illusion and I think transsexual is transsexual. I think they're two separate categories. I don't consider it female impersonation when they have boobs and all that stuff. Not that there's anything wrong with that, but it's no longer illusion. That's just my personal

Grey in a recent photo as his alter-ego "Betty."



take on it. I've always had cleavage when I performed and I weigh 140 pounds. And, when I was with The Box, crossdressing was illegal, in most of the cities we were in.

MB: Crossdressing off-stage?

GR: Either/or. In The Box we used to have to pull our wigs off at the end to show that we were men. We had to do it in Reno. Every place. Everyone used wigs, except Laverne Cummings, when she was there. As I understand, she always had her own hair. Used to pull it back, so it didn't show and wear a beret. He did that his whole life, even when he was at Finocchio's.

But in Baltimore, because of the show's schedule, we didn't have time to take off our make-up and go have lunch. So Danny arranged that we could go out. You didn't have to take your hair off, you didn't have to take your face off, but you had to wear men's clothes and stay within a one block radius of the theater. That was the arrangement with the police department and they would have police out there to make sure we stayed within that one block, like Nazi Germany. So we all decided that rolled-up jeans, high heels and tits were men's clothes. They didn't tell us we had to take off our tits.

We found a little place right across the street called Mama's, which had soul food. At 3 o'clock in the afternoon she had 25 customers who were paying good money for her food. Black people are just not intimidated by drag for the most part. That's why we were so popular at the Apollo. We played Baltimore about six weeks and we all gained about 15 pounds on Mama's soul food.

MB: Could there ever be another Jewel Box Revue?

GR: A lot of people tried to copy the Jewel Box show. They couldn't. The costumes in the Jewel Box were unbelievable and it was all orchestrated professionally. There was special material and sets. It wasn't just a bunch of guys in drag just up on stage. It was all a "book show," which meant you did the same every night at the same time. The curtain went up at 8:30 and we were done at 10:20. They supplied all the costumes. They provided the transportation. All you had to provide was your hair and your shoes. We had an orchestra leader, orchestrations, choreographer, three acts and then Lynn Carter, the star, who closed the show with her impersonations. We had the Pink Opening:

*"In Shakespeare's day the law would not permit
A woman on the stage, it was prohibited.
But now a-days a gentleman plays
A woman's role, he does it to cause merriment."*



Mr Lynn Carter

And we would run through the audience as men in the beginning. We were in full face, but the lights weren't on and the audience didn't know. The showgirls would go off-stage and the ponies (dancers), would go behind a screen on-stage and change from male to female. It was all in pink. The men were in pink tuxedos and they would go on with this song as the kids got in drag. Then about a minute later the ponys came out in their pink, sequined two piece Jackie Kennedy suits danced with the guys until the showgirls were ready. The music would go on and we'd have the showgirl parade, wearing long pink sequined dresses; each of different design, but all the same color.

MB: So you all got dressed in a minute?

GR: Maybe two. I would take my jeans off. Take my tennis shoes off. Take off my jean jacket. Take the powder off my lips, just use your tongue. Throw on a wig. Throw on a dress and the tits and parade. You know, it's amazing, what needs to be perfect in the mirror, from the front row doesn't need to be that perfect. I mean you're on a big theater stage. Bruno [leFantastique] used to put his make-up on with a plow and he looked fine. He was old and he was shaky. He used to just put on a base and throw on some

continued next page

lips. Take the eyebrow pencil and put on some liner. It was never right, but he looked fine. He didn't wear lashes or anything. I used to spend hours. But, he could carry it off. He always had a fabulous gown that he would make himself. That added to his glamour.

We had the Pink Opening, the Oriental Finale and the Storybook Finale. Lynn would come out after the Oriental Finale and do his act. Then we'd do the Storybook Finale and that would end the show. Lynn did impersonations of Pearl Bailey and Bette Davis. He was famous for Pearl Bailey.

All the places we played, even small places like Syracuse or Flint, we were treated very nicely. I don't know if it was out of respect or fear. Drag was still illegal in most places. You weren't supposed to do it. We got away with it because of the size of the show and there might have been money involved. I don't know. I think one reason we got away with it is that we arrived at the theater as guys and we left as guys.

When we played L.A., female impersonation was against the law, but they never stopped us. But, unless you had a lot of money, you wouldn't want to put yourself in that position because in L.A. you would have been arrested. Period. In fact the first time I did drag it was Halloween in L.A., which was about a year prior to joining the Jewel Box, and a cop asked me if I was a woman or a man. I said, "I'm a man." He said, "You have to be off the street by midnight or I'll bust you." Because, technically, after midnight it wasn't Halloween anymore. That was typical of Los Angeles at the time.

MB: Did you ever have crossdressers in the audience.

GR: Could be. I don't know. Supposedly John F. Kennedy saw us, but I don't think he was a crossdresser.

MB: Did you meet any stars?

GR: Oh, yeah, Ella Fitzgerald and Sammy Davis, that's it. There were silly things that went on, too. It wasn't all serious. One time at the El Capitan, Billy Austin, my comedy partner, and Doddie Daniels got in some kind of fight. So Billy Austin came into the theater early one morning and took a little tuft of gray fur off one of his furs. It was ratty anyway. He put it on a string, put it in the waste paper basket and ran the string up over the mirrors, out the

window and out to the fire escape. Doddie came in to put on her make-up. Billy waited until Doddie was really into it. We used to concentrate. He started to pull on the string and this gray fur started climbing up the wall. Well, you could hear Doddie screaming in Oakland and we were in Los Angeles. Then after she realized that Billy had done something all you could hear was, "You dirty motherfucker, I'm gonna kill you." Doddie chased Billy all over that theater and you could just hear those high heels knocking on the steel steps running between the four floors of dressing rooms. There's always something that goes on. You have nothing on and your gaff breaks and there you are standing in front of 500 people.

**"We all
decided that
rolled-up
jeans, high
heels and tits,
were men's
clothes."**

MB: Did that happen to anyone?

GR: Yes.

MB: You're looking sheepish.

GR: Me. Fortunately I had on opera hose and a costume, but you feel it.

MB: How much of the show's closing was because of changes in the entertainment media? The Jewel Box was part of vaudeville's last gasp. Do you think the show could have kept going, even though people were going to theater less and watching television more?

GR: I think you would have had to scale it down. I don't know. If I was a multi-millionaire, I would put it back together. Even now. It was that good of a show. It was, and still is to me, though that's maybe just fond memories, a very exciting show.



[The publisher would like to thank Grey, MsBob & Carol for this particularly interesting and enjoyable feature.]

Ms BOB is a collector of gender related books, magazines and ephemera. She is desperately seeking a copy of Drag #9 (Queens Publications, 1973). You can contact her at <msbob@tgforum.com> or c/o Lady Like.

CAROL KLEINMAIER is a founding member of Transgendered Nation. For over a decade she has been an activist for both gender and AIDS issues.

If there is any subject or person you'd be interested having covered in FLASH BACK, *LadyLike's* history column, please, let us know and we will try to oblige.



Tales from the Jewel Box Revue

Lee Loren replaced Bobby Lake as lead dancer of The Box, so we had to rehearse all the numbers. In the Storybook Finale the principle dancer plays the girl court jester. The dress had a very full skirt and full sleeves and it's all done in black and white sequins. It weighed about 75 pounds. It was made for Bobby and it was big. Bobby was about 5'10" and Lee was 5'5." At dress rehearsal we got to the part where Lee had to pirouette from the back of the stage to the front. With the weight of the dress, when Lee started doing pirouettes, he pirouetted right off the stage into the orchestra pit and landed on the grand piano. The momentum just kept him going. And he went fast. He looked like a little top.

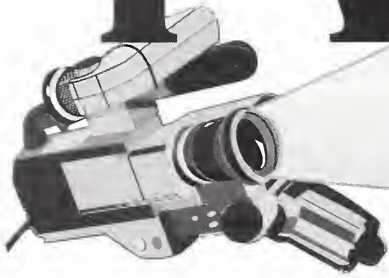
Left & below, Mr. Bobby Lake



Mr. Lee Loren



TV VIDEO REVIEWS



In the past few years there have been a number of films with transgender themes or actors playing a transgendered person. The Crying Game; Priscilla, Queen of the Desert; To Wong Foo..., and M. Butterfly are recent releases that have achieved same degree of acclaim.

Although there are many more transgender oriented films today, there have been a number of such films since the 1960s. Most were the efforts of independent film makers. Most were low budget and often had obvious technical and acting flaws. Almost all of them had minor and very brief theatrical exposure and quickly faded from sight.

Many of these half-forgotten films have recently been transferred to video tape and are available from video ces that specialize in cult and obscure cinema. This column will review some of the lesser known films. You may find, as I have, that most of these films are not only fun and entertaining to watch, but they also offer some interesting insights about one of our favorite subjects — crossdressing.

The Woman Inside

The stories about people and events that we watch on the screen and video are endlessly appealing to us. Screenplays present unique and fascinating drama about the human struggle and how individuals seek to make the impossible possible. The fascination is even greater when the struggle or problem portrayed on screen is similar to the drama actually taking place in the viewers life. Thus, we seek out and enjoy stories about people that relate to our own personal life drama.

That's why I'm always delighted to find an obscure video gem that deals with one of my favorite subjects—crossdressing. Over the years I've collected so many films dealing with crossdressing and each film has something unique to tell us about this fascinating subject.

Film has much more to tell than personal drama. It also reveals societal attitudes about issues, problems and conflicts that are present when the screenplay is written. In fact some say that film is culture's dreams.

If you think about it, films are remarkably like dreams. A few of the obvious similarities in film are abrupt scene changes, distorted time sequences, surrealistic landscapes and altered reality.

Some say that dreams are much like picture postcards. They are like benchmarks or sign posts that guide

a person at a particular stage in one's journey through life. Dreams, often called the forgotten language, provide information that helps one understand oneself, as well as assisting in solving conflicts and problems that we continually face in life.

If film is culture's dreams, then films that have TG themes should reveal definite changes in the way TGs are portrayed over time. In other words, as society's attitudes towards TGs altered, film would show the changes in the way TG roles were portrayed on screen.

In fact, that is exactly what we see if we look at the TG films beginning with the very first film effort in trying to explain the little known world of transvestites and transsexuals. That was Ed Wood's 1953 cult classic, *Glen or Glenda*. It was a pioneering effort which attempted to explain the how and why of TGs and a plea for acceptance and understanding from society. It was followed by the 1967 film *She Man*, *The Christine Jorgensen Story*, 1972, *I Want What I Want*, 1972 and *Let Me Die A Woman*, 1978. The latter four films have been featured in previous *Lady-Like* "TVideo Reviews."

These films were pleas for acceptance from society. They were often clinical in nature, with the aim of explaining the TG's plight as the result of a medical condition rather



Aunt Coll (Joan Blondell, left) is stunned to see that Hollis has breasts.

than a disordered and diseased mental state.

The 1979 film *Woman Inside* was the last of what I regard as educational films. Subsequent films have dealt with TGs by involving them in story lines that deal with everyday problems and relationships. An excellent example is the 1995 film *Different For Girls*. This film does not even go into the why and how of transsexuality. Instead it tells the story of a loving relationship.

To illustrate the evolution of the TG in film, the current very popular BBC docu-soap, *Paddington Green*, features a pre-op transsexual playing a pre-op transsexual. No longer does a person who is a transsexual result in sensationalistic news coverage. In fact with most people, the mention of the subject hardly elicits a yawn. Cultures attitudes towards the TG have clearly changed and this is reflected in film.

Woman Inside is a transitional film from the earlier educational -plea for acceptance films. It begins to explore relationships in greater detail, and as we shall see, raises some interesting philosophical and ethical questions a TG faces if she pursues SRS.

Woman Inside is a low budget film written and directed by a relative unknown, Joseph VanWinkle. Filmed in 1979, the rights were bought by Fox in 1980 and it was released in 1981. It was shown as a second feature, received poor reviews and quickly disappeared into obscurity.

It stars an unknown actress, Gloria Manon, who plays the role of Hollis who becomes Holly. Supporting roles are

played by Dane Clark (the sympathetic surgeon), a well known general tough guy actor from the 40's and 50's, and Joan Blondell (as Hollis/Holly's Aunt Coll), the wisecracking, dizzy heroine in numerous films in the 30's and 40's. This was Joan Blondell's last film and *Woman Inside* is noteworthy for that fact.

The film's storyline is pretty stereotyped and predictable. It begins with Holly being prepared for surgery. The surgeon, Dr. Rassner (Dane Clark) says to Holly, "Genesis." Holly replies, "At Last." From here on there are a number of flashbacks which tell us about Hollis/Holly's life and her struggle to become a woman.

The first flashback takes us to a battle scene somewhere in Vietnam. Hollis is a soldier and has just been wounded in battle. He is taken to a village where a pretty young Vietnamese woman is nursing him. Reaching out to her he states, "This is how it should be... I'm ugly and deformed." He is of course referring to his male body which is "deformed" because it is not a female body.

Hollis returns home to Los Angeles a hero. For reasons not made clear he and Aunt Coll co-own the home which was originally belonged to Hollis' parents. Aunt Coll is not happy to see Hollis. She taunts him saying she has "saved his clothes." Presumably, Hollis was a crossdresser well before he entered the service. Aunt Coll rubs it in, "What would your father say to you? He played football at Stanford. You're a weirdo."

Undaunted by Aunt Coll, Hollis acknowledges his desire to seek out a surgeon who will help him become a woman. He obtains an appointment with Dr. Rassner, who is considered to be "the best." In the interview he tells Hollis the necessary steps he must take before he will perform surgery. Hollis must cross live for one year, obtain a job as a woman and begin hormone therapy.

Hollis enthusiastically follows Dr. Rassner's advice. He begins taking hormones and soon has well formed breasts. Hollis begins living as Holly, gets a job driving a cab, and is saving money for the operation. Cosmetic surgery is performed giving her a more feminine nose.

While driving her cab she meets Nolan, a pianist and singer at a bar. Nolan falls in love with Holly and she with him. But there is the obvious complication. Should Holly tell her secret or should she wait until she has the operation and not have to tell? This problem is only superficially explored. The cosmetic surgeon says she must tell Nolan the truth. Dr. Rassner refers Holly to a TS support group to help her resolve the problem.

continued next page



Hollis/Holly longs for her femininity

Holly is very upset and dismayed at what she hears from the group. The group is largely composed of post-op women, some of whom pass only marginally. The discussion centers around the need for one another's ongoing support. In addition the group stresses that everyone, out of necessity, must reveal the fact they were once a male.

Upset and scared, Holly tells Dr. Rassner, "Isn't the idea to be free? A transsexual spends half her life thinking about becoming a whole woman. Then she spends the rest of her life explaining it and apologizing to everybody."

Convinced that Holly has thought out the issue and has come to a reasonable choice, Dr. Rassner performs the surgery and Holly accomplishes "Genesis." In all previous TG films this was the ending. Becoming a woman meant all was going to turn out well.

Woman Inside does not end with that simplistic message and things do not turn out all that well. Nolan discovers Holly's secret, thanks to Aunt Coll who revealed all. Nolan says, "You should have told me!" Holly responds, "And if I would have?" Nolan's cynically answers, "We can both do better." We cheer Holly who retorts, "You're damn right we can do better!"

Starting a new life, Holly moves to San Francisco. As the film credits come up on the screen, a handsome man bumps into her at a concession stand on Fisherman's Wharf. As the credits close, Holly and this handsome young man are having a glass of wine together. We are left with the possibility that Holly will find happiness and love.

Every single review of *Woman Inside* was negative. One

reviewer called it, "Cheesy, weird and boring." I liked this film. It portrays Hollis/Holly and sex change surgery in a positive mature fashion. It avoids being clinical and spares us from the gruesome details of the surgery. Instead the film focuses on some of the critical issues that a TS faces in making the transition from male to female.

The acting is very good. Gloria Manon is very realistic playing Hollis/Holly. The rest of the cast play out fairly stereotyped roles that are believable, including Joan Blondell as the sarcastic, rejecting, vindictive Aunt Coll.

The main criticism of *Woman Inside* is the idea that one must lie about one's past in order to find happiness and intimacy. In other words, the film suggests that a post-op transsexual must be dishonest in order to enter into a so-called "normal relationship." Perhaps this is an unfair criticism. This film was made in 1979. The question about the merits of erasing ones' past is a complicated one. It has been nearly twenty years since this film asked the question. There still isn't an answer that fits everyone. But, maybe it is the wrong question. As Holly states, "After the operation [the post-op transsexual] spends the rest of her life explaining it." The most important question may be why does one need to explain anything? After all, we are who we are. Why do we need to apologize or explain that?

Woman Inside is available only as a mail order rental film. Call Video Vault at 1-703-549 -8848.

Next time — a film that is truly a dream sequence. It is the very unique film from Japan, *Funeral Procession of Roses*. What was the drag bar scene like in Japan in the 60's? This film reveals all and tells it using the classic Greek myth Oedipus Rex with Oedipus as a swishy sissy drag queen. Its all a bit wacky but fun. Don't miss it.



Holly on the operating table after her SRS

Mirror Tallol



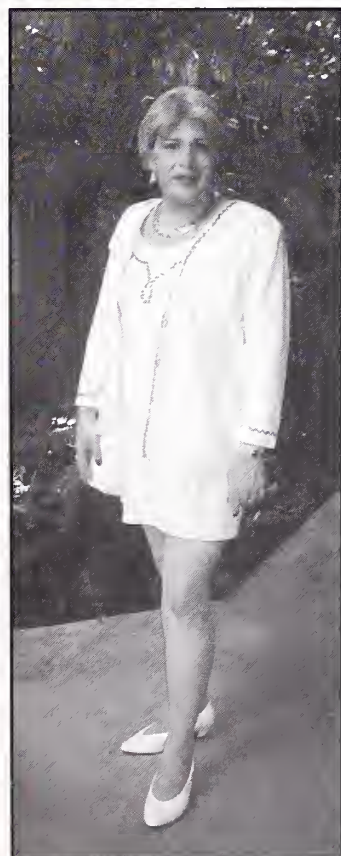
▲ AlisonCD@aol.com

Jessica M, PO Bo 6120331,
NB CA 92651 ▼



▲ TVTamara@netscape.net

Micheline Montreuil, 1050
Orléans, Charlesbourg
Quebec Canada G1H 2H2
▼



▲ Alison Young, PO Box 764,
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▲ Christine Velmer, PO Box 256, Riddle OR 97469

Stephanie
FWD3196
Stephi@tqforum.com ▶

Valerie Jones,
PO Box 17, Arroyo Grande, CA 93421 ▼



Lisa Ashley, PO Box 14701, Toledo OH 43614 ▼



▲ Cynthia NE Ohio FWD3296



▲ Lois Boyd, 9006 Hwy 76S, Stanton TN 38069



▲ Sherry Renee - kittykatx9@aol.com

Mirror Mirror



▲ The Amandas, Grae (r.) & Richards (l.).
That's Tamara in the center

▼ Christine, Colo.



▲ Cindy, Calif.



▲ Charlotte, Savannah, Ga.

▼ Reneé Miller, Iowa



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On My Mind...



ENDA! ENDA! We don't need no stinkin' ENDA!

Now, before you call out the troops, lemme 'splain.

The "we" I was referring to above are the crossdressers in our community. I honestly do not believe that crossdressers need ENDA. In fact, if we push for CD-inclusion in legal language,

we're going to open up a real can of worms and make it nearly impossible to get transgender-inclusive language in ENDA or any other legislation.

A case in point is the recent anti-discrimination legislation approved in Lexington, Kentucky. The tg activists had a hell of a time getting tg-inclusive language into the legislation because of a perception that crossdressers would be allowed to show up for work in drag. No one, including the tg activists themselves, wanted or expected that to be protected.

The problem was caused by the opponents of tg-inclusion seizing on an obscure employment policy recommendation posted at the It's Time America! website. The text allowed for the possibility of an employee showing up for work crossdressed. The policy recommendation was written by Mary Ann Horton, who identifies as a crossdresser, for her company, Lucent Technologies. Mary Ann has the freedom to appear at work enfemme and she was just trying to help others achieve the same privilege. Only problem is — it backfired.

The web page with the policy recommendation was controversial from the start. Many of the ITA! activists from around the country were upset because it looked like the page was an ITA! national policy and no one had voted on the subject. There were many requests to take the page down, but these were ignored for whatever reasons.

The crossdressing-at-work issue became known as "flip-flopping," and the fit really hit the shan when the page was used as ammunition against tg-inclusion in the Kentucky legislation. The folks at It's Time Kentucky! went ballistic and when the page was still not removed from the ITA! website, they changed their name to TRANSFair Kentucky so as to divorce themselves from the apparent ITA! policy.

Got all that? Good, 'cause it need not have happened.

Generally speaking, crossdressers do not need employment or fair-housing protections. The reason being that no one would know they were crossdressers unless they're told. It isn't readily obvious that someone is a crossdresser, even when there are physical signs. For example, my eyebrows are thin and my nails tend to be long, but hardly anyone notices or comments. So, unless I or someone else says something, my crossdressing activities are generally a non-issue.

Transgenderists and transsexuals need employment and housing protections because they're making a public and visible gender change, and, in many cases, especially during early transition, it's very obvious that they're in-between. This is the time when most TG and TS people experience severe discrimination. This is when they need the law the most.

But there's no good reason why a crossdresser **needs** to show up at work enfemme one day and enhomme the next. Employers have a right to expect some stability in the workplace and "flip-flopping" does not promote that.

As for getting fired just for being a crossdresser, Hell, the CIA, the NSA, NASA, and many other government agencies now recognize that crossdressing is no big deal (thanks to Cissy Conley and Rene Fenner). It would be extreme (in my opinion) for someone to get fired for crossdressing while away from work, unless that person was crossdressing **and** breaking a law.

So, why make it difficult for everyone else? Let's keep our eye on the prize, employment and housing protections for those who really need it, and leave occasional crossdressing out of the workplace.

On a lighter note, we had a lot of positive response to our "Hot Babes & Hot Rods" theme issue. Many of you wanted more themes, preferably ones where you didn't have to be outside (where's the fun in that?). So, we've got two themes for you, (1) you and your pets (nothing kinky, please!), and (2) you and your toys. When we've collected enough photos on a theme, we'll run the feature. If you've got other suggestions, let us know. But, above all — send in your photos!

JoAnn Roberts

Last issue's contest: Over 35 people responded and everyone got the answer correct. That beautiful bottom belonged to Jeri Jones of Utah. The winner was Joy Kamei of Los Angeles. Joy's photo is at the upper left on page 24. Congratulations!

Tamara's Tresses

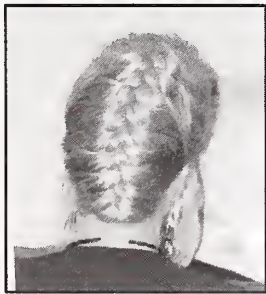
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